

25 June 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR: [REDACTED]

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ATTENTION: [REDACTED]

SUBJECT: International Rail Traffic Coordination and Standardization

1. We are endeavoring to prepare a paper on the subject which we hope will enable us to determine the degree of railroad coordination and standardization achieved within the Bloc. As you are aware, the OESRD (Organization for Coordination of Railways), the successor to B.U.D. with headquarters in Warsaw, is the official Bloc organization responsible for administering agreements and treaties pertaining to international rail traffic within the Bloc. Our information on that organization is reasonably good although probably not entirely current. However, we are not fully conversant with the procedures for handling Bloc traffic which originates at or is destined to points outside the Bloc. There are agreements for example between Poland and West Germany, Poland and the UK with transit through Holland and Belgium, and both West and East Germany. We can find no evidence of similar agreements between the USSR and West European countries. We are posing here a few questions on which you may be able to shed some light.

a. One car load of tea originating in China and destined to Belgium, transiting USSR, Poland, East Germany and West Germany.

b. One car load machinery originating in France and destined for the USSR, transiting West Germany and Czechoslovakia.

2. In example (a) we assume shipment would move under terms and conditions of Bloc agreements (S.M.G.S.) and (E.T.T.). Can this be confirmed? What procedures and what documents are required at the East-West German borders; and at the West German-Belgium border? What freight rate would apply through West Germany and how does the rate compare with West German internal rate for equal distance.

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What is the authority for the West German transit rate? Is it a published tariff, treaty or agreement? Would the same rate apply on similar goods originating in Austria and transiting West Germany? In example (b), what change in documentation takes place at the West German-Czech border? What rate would apply and by what authority is the rate applicable?

3. In either or both examples how, and from what source does the West German railway obtain payment for its services? We hope that the questions posed here can be answered by the West German Ministry of Transport or by the railway administration. If this is the case, your reply at the earliest possible date will be appreciated.

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